

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, ECON, PINT, HA, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT DUVALIER'S ANNUAL ANCESTOR'S DAY ADDRESS

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER DELIVERED HIS ANNUAL ANCESTOR'S DAY SPEECH ON HAITIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION JANUARY 2. AS IN PAST TWO YEARS, SPEECH WAS MAINLY AN OUTLINE OF WHAT THE GOH CONSIDERS ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PAST YEAR AND WHAT IT PLANS TO EMPHASIZE IN 1974. POLITICALLY, SPEECH CONTAINED NO MAJOR NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS, BUT WAS REASONED, RESTRAINED, AND CONCILIATORY IN TONE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, DUVALIER'S ANCESTOR'S DAY ADDRESS CLAIMED A NUMBER OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR HAITIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE RESUMPTION OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH VENEZUELA, ECUADOR AND COSTA RICA; GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC; STRENGTHENED TIES WITH AFRICA; AND POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE. ON THE UNITED STATES, DUVALIER CITED THE RECENT EXCHANGE OF NEW AMBASSADORS, THE U.S. RESPONSE TO "OUR APPEAL IN CERTAIN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES" (PRESUMABLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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NATIONAL PALACE FIRE), THE VISIT OF THE US NAVY HOSPITAL SHIP "SANCTUARY", HAITI'S PURCHASE OF SOME MILITARY MATERIAL FROM THE UNITED STATES, AND THE SIGNATURE OF NEW AID AGREEMENTS AS SIGNS OF "INTENSIFYING HAITIAN-

AMERICAN COOPERATION." RELATIONS WITH FRANCE, HE
CONTINUED, WERE MARKED BY SIGNATURE OF IMPORTANT ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT, AN INVESTMENT GUARANTEE AGREEMENT,
FRENCH DONATIONS OF HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT TO HAITI AND
(PROSPECTIVE) FRENCH AID FOR HAITIAN ROADS AND AIRPORTS.
ASSISTANCE TO HAITI FROM WEST GERMANY, CANADA, THE
REPUBLIC OF CHINA, AND ISRAEL ALSO RECEIVED FAVORABLE
MENTION IN THE ADDRESS AS SIGNS OF INCREASINGLY PROMISING
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITH HAITI.

3. SURVEYING HAITI'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, DUVALIER FIRST
STRESSED THE "WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC CRISIS" OF SUPPLY
SHORTAGES, INFLATION, AND DEVALUATIONS, DECLARING THAT
HAITI, "LIKE ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, CANNOT ESCAPE
THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS ECONOMIC CRISIS." TO MEET THE
ECONOMIC CRISIS, HE STRESSED THE GOH'S IMPORTATION OF
BASIC FOOD ITEMS FOR SALE AT COST OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND

SAID HIS GOVERNMENT HAD REACHED AGREEMENT WITH "FRIENDLY
COUNTRIES" AND OIL COMPANIES TO SATISFY HAITI'S PETROLEUM
NEEDS (A REMARK WHICH RECEIVED AS MUCH APPLAUSE AS ANY
IN THE SPEECH). THE PRESIDENT THEN LISTED FOLLOWING INDICATORS
OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN 1973: TOURISM UP STRONGLY, WITH 300
NEW HOTEL ROOMS OPENED AND NEW HOTEL INVESTMENT OF \$20 MILLION
UNDER WAY; INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION UP 20 PERCENT FOR THE YEAR, WITH
NEARLY 20,000 WORKERS NOW EMPLOYED AT 291 PLANTS IN PORT-AU-
PRINCE AREA, ACCORDING TO A RECENT UN STUDY, AND 21 NEW
PLANTS WITH 4,500 NEW JOBS IN SIGHT FOR 1974; BUILDING
CONSTRUCTION UP 25 PERCENT; CEMENT PRODUCTION QUADRUPLED, FROM
85,000 TO 320,000 TONS;
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT UP 6 PERCENT; TWO NEW
BANKS OPENED, ONE HAITIAN AND ONE FOREIGN; THE LARGEST NATIONAL
BUDGET EVER IN HAITI, WITH OVER HALF OF FUNDS TO BE DEVOTED
TO DEVELOPMENT; AND INSTALLATION OF THIRD TURBINE AT PELIGRE
HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, REPRESENTING TRIPLED OF COUNTRY'S
ELECTRIC POWER PRODUCTION SINCE 1970. FOR FUTURE
INDUSTRIALIZATION, HE MENTIONED THE HOPE OF ATTRACTING MORE
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INVESTMENT OUTSIDE OF THE PORT-AU-PRINCE AREA.

4. OUTLINING GOH'S OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORT, DUVALIER
STRESSED COMMUNICATIONS (ESPECIALLY ROADS) AND AGRICULTURE.
FOLLOWING RECENT SIGNATURE OF \$22 MILLION IDB SOUTHERN ROAD
LOAN, BEGINNING OF WORK ON FRENCH PROJECT TO PAVE ROAD TO
JACMEL, AND USAID LOAN ASSISTANCE TO MODERNIZE HAITI'S ROAD
MAINTENANCE SERVICE, HE DECLARED 1974 WOULD SEE "COLOSSAL
EFFORT" IN THE FIELD OF ROADS AND COMMUNICATIONS "TO TIE
TOGETHER THE NATION'S SOCIAL CLASSES". HE ALSO DECLARED HE
HAD ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO ACCELERATE "ALL FORMALITIES" SO
THAT WORK ON THESE MAJOR PROJECTS MAY BEGIN "WITHIN THE

NEXT FEW MONTHS." TO STRENGTHEN LAGGING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, HE SAID GOH HAD COMPLETED RECONSTRUCTION OF VITAL IRRIGATION DAM IN THE ARTIBONITE VALLEY, CLEANED MANY MILES OF IRRIGATION CANALS, AND DISTRIBUTED GREAT QUANTITIES OF SEEDS AND PESTICIDES TO THE PEASANTS. ALSO, GOH HAD EARMARKED NEW CREDIT OF OVER \$1 MILLION FOR MODERNIZATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.

5. SPEECH CONCLUDED WITH STRONG APPEAL FOR THE UNITY OF ALL HAITIANS "WITHOUT DISTINCTION WHATSOEVER" TO REALIZE GOAL OF "HAPPINESS, PEACE, AND PROSPERITY" FOR ALL HAITIANS.

6. COMMENT: 1973 WAS FOR THE MOST PART A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR THE GOH, PLAUGED BY A SKYROCKETING COST OF LIVING, FOOD SHORTAGES, INTERNAL STRAINS AND DISARRY IN THE GOVERNMENT, AND OTHER PROBLEMS. BY YEAR'S END, HOWEVER, AND PARTICULARLY AFTER THE SALUTARY PERSONNEL SHAKE-UP OF AUGUST, THE REGIME'S WORST PROBLEMS OF INTERNAL DISARRAY SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN LARGEY OVERCOME, AND THE GOH SEEMED TO BE FUNCTIONING WITH SOMEWHAT MORE COHESION AND SENSE OF DIRECTION THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE DEATH OF FRANCOIS DUVALIER. IN THE MEANTIME, ECONOMIC GROWTH IN PORT-AU-PRINCE WAS SUBSTANTIAL, NOTABLY IN TOURISM, INDUSTRY, AND CONSTRUCTION. IN SUM, THE YEAR, WHICH BEGAN RATHER POORLY, ENDED ON A STRONG NOTE OF PEACE, STABILITY, AND ECONOMIC GROWTH (IN THE CAPITAL AT LEAST).

7. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, PRESIDENT DUVALIER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS MAY BE VIEWED AS A RATHER RESTRAINED CATALOGING OF WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS ITS ACHIEVEMENTS (OBVIOUSLY GLOSSING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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OVER WEAK SPOTS, SUCH AS THE WRETCHED CONDITION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE), AND A STATEMENT OF WHAT THE REGIME INTENDS TO EMPHASIZE IN THE COMING YEAR, WHICH IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE PRESIDENT'S DELIVERY THIS YEAR WAS GOOD: DIRECT, CONFIDENT, AND THOUGHTFUL AND REASONED IN TONE. THERE WERE NO WARNINGS TO ADVERSARIES, NO EXAGGERATED PROMISES, AND NO STRIDENCY OF TONE. AT THE END OF HIS SPEECH, THE PRESIDENT PAUSED CAREFULLY TO EMPHASIZE THE WORDS "WITHOUT DISTINCTION" WHEN HE WISHED ALL HAITIANS THE BEST FOR THE NEW YEAR.

8. IN THE PAST YEAR THE EMBASSY HAS HAD A NUMBER OF INDICATIONS THAT PRESIDENT JEAN-CLAUDE DUVALIER HAS GROWN SUBSTANTIALLY, HAS A NUMBER OF IDEALISTIC IMPULSES ABOUT DOING MORE FOR THE COUNTRY, AND HAS A SENSE OF URGENCY ABOUT ACCELERATING THE GOVERNMENT'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORT (WHICH CAME THROUGH IN THE SPEECH). GIVEN A BIT OF LUCK, 1974 COULD WELL BE A YEAR OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN HAITI, WITHIN THE LIMITATIONS OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE IN THIS LEAST DEVELOPED WESTERN HEMISPHERE COUNTRY.
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